Hybrid Detection and Analysis of Network-layer Attacks using Acoustic Signatures and Amplification Factor Modeling

Dissertation submitted to
Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology, Nagpur
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of
the degree

Master of Technology
in
Computer Science & Engineering

by

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under the guidance of

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Nagpur 440 010 (India)

JUNE 2025

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Declaration

I, **Jatin Sharma**, hereby declare that this dissertation titled **" Hybrid Detection and Analysis of Network-layer Attacks using Acoustic Signatures and Amplification Factor Modeling "** is carried out by me in the Department of Computer Science & Engineering of Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology, Nagpur. The work is original and has not been submitted earlier whole or in part for the award of any degree at this or any other Institution.

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Certificate

This to certify that the dissertation titled **"Hybrid Detection and Analysis of Network-layer Attacks using Acoustic Signatures and Amplification Factor Modeling"** is submitted by **Jatin Sharma** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Technology in Computer Science & Engineering**, VNIT Nagpur. The work is comprehensive, complete, and fit for final evaluation.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and sincere appreciation to my supervisor, **Dr. Kumari Nidhi Lal**, for providing me with the opportunity to work on this thesis, Hybrid Detection and Analysis of Network-layer Attacks using Acoustic Signatures and Amplification Factor Modeling. Their unwavering support, insightful guidance, technical expertise, and constant encouragement have been instrumental in shaping this research. I feel truly privileged to have had the opportunity to work under their mentorship, which has not only enriched my understanding of network security but also inspired me to push the boundaries of innovation.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to **Dr. M. P. Kurhekar**, Head of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, for their invaluable support and guidance throughout this academic journey. Their encouragement and belief in my potential have been pivotal in the successful completion of this project, and I am deeply grateful for their contributions.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the teaching and non-teaching faculty members of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at [Your Institution's Name] for their knowledge sharing, constructive feedback, and provision of essential resources whenever needed. Their assistance has been vital in ensuring the smooth progress of this research.

Finally, I owe a special thanks to my family and friends for their unwavering support, love, and encouragement throughout this journey. Their belief in my abilities, patience during my long hours of work, and motivation during challenging times have been the cornerstone of my success. This thesis is as much a reflection of their support as it is of my efforts.

Jatin Sharma

ABSTRACT

Network-layer attacks, like Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) amplification attacks, causes major hit to the security and availability of modern networks, effecting critical systems, like healthcare and e-commerce platforms. This thesis is proposing a novel hybrid framework for enhancing the detection and analysis of such attacks by integrating acoustic signature-based MitM detection with an enhanced Amplification Factor (AF) for DDoS analysis. The framework is trying to address key gaps in existing methods, including the limitations of timing-based detection in such environments where ICMP is restricted and the absence of dynamic factors in amplification metrics. Acoustic signatures, derived from the unique device profiles of network nodes, are stitched with timing features to improve MitM detection, while the upgraded AF provides a more accurate assessment of DDoS amplification impact by including attack duration and topology factors. A controlled LAN environment was setup for this, simulating ARP spoofing and TFTP-based DDoS attacks, also data has been collected including acoustic signatures and network traffic. Python is used to implement this framework and evaluated using metrics such as Detection Rate (DR), False Positive Rate (FPR), and Mean Absolute Error (MAE). Final analysis demonstrate a DR of 93% for MitM detection, surpassing the baseline Vesper framework's 88%, with an FPR of 3% and a response time of 1.8 seconds.Scalability was maintained up to 100 Mbps, though performance degraded at higher rates. This study contributes a multi-modal approach to MitM detection, a dynamic AF for DDoS analysis, and a foundation for future research in network security, paving the way for more resilient digital infrastructures.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation

In today's hyper-connected digital landscape, network security is paramount to safeguarding critical infrastructure and sensitive data. According to the *Global Cybersecurity Report 2023*, over 2.3 billion cyber attacks were recorded worldwide, with network-layer threats like Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks leading the charge [9]. These attacks not only disrupt services but also incur significant financial losses—estimated at $6 trillion annually by Cybersecurity Ventures—and pose risks to national security.

Consider the 2016 DDoS attack on Dyn, which exploited amplification techniques using the Mirai botnet to overwhelm servers, knocking out major platforms like Twitter, Netflix, and Reddit for hours [3]. This incident underscored the destructive potential of amplification-based DDoS attacks, where small requests trigger disproportionately large responses. Similarly, the 2015 Belgacom MitM attack, attributed to state-sponsored actors, intercepted telecommunications data, exposing vulnerabilities in network-layer defenses [19]. These high-profile cases illustrate the urgent need for innovative detection and analysis methods.

This thesis proposes a hybrid approach to address these challenges, combining acoustic signatures—borrowing from echolocation principles—to detect MitM attacks, with an enhanced amplification factor model to analyze DDoS threats. By tackling the limitations

of existing tools, this work aims to strengthen network resilience against increasingly sophisticated cyber threats.

Table 1.1: Frequency and Impact of Network-layer Attacks in 2023

Attack Type	**Number of Incidents**	**Estimated Cost (USD)**
Man-in-the-Middle (MitM)	450,000	$1.2 billion
DDoS (Amplification)	1,200,000	$3.5 billion
Other Network-layer Attacks	650,000	$1.8 billion

1.2 Problem Statement

MitM attacks in Local Area Networks (LANs) are notoriously difficult to detect due to their stealthy nature. Attackers often use ARP spoofing to reroute traffic through their machines, evading traditional detection tools like intrusion detection systems (IDS). Studies show that IDS solutions suffer from false positive rates as high as 30% and struggle with protocol-specific exploits [8]. Additionally, in environments where hosts block ICMP requests for security, detection becomes even more challenging, as many tools rely on ICMP-based probing.

Amplification-based DDoS attacks present a parallel challenge. The original Amplification Factor (AAF) equation, $\text{AAF} = \left(\frac{\sum \text{size of all responses}}{\text{size of request}}\right) \times \left(1 - \frac{\text{Packet Loss in \%}}{100}\right)$, provides a basic measure of amplification but overlooks critical factors like network latency, routing hops, and packet jitter [25]. For example, in a TFTP amplification attack, the equation might overestimate impact if latency delays response aggregation, leading to inaccurate threat assessments.

This thesis introduces a hybrid framework to address these deficiencies, leveraging acoustic signatures for precise MitM detection and a refined AAF model for robust DDoS analysis, offering a comprehensive solution to these pervasive threats.

1.3 Objectives

The primary aim of this thesis is to develop a hybrid framework integrating acoustic signatures and an improved amplification factor model to enhance network-layer security.

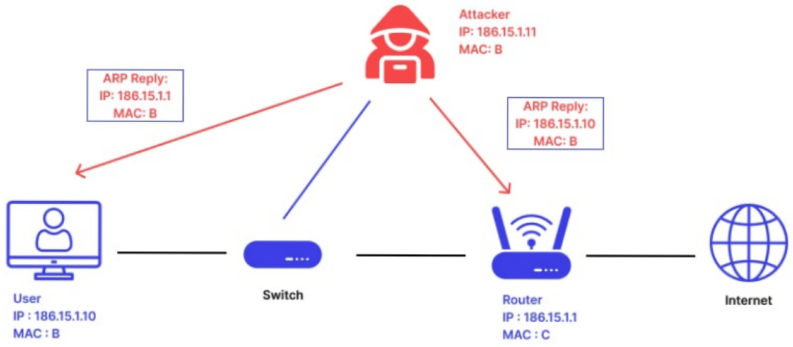


Figure 1.1: Illustration of a Man-in-the-Middle Attack Process: The attacker intercepts communication between Host A and Host B by spoofing ARP responses.

The specific objectives include:

- **Extend the Vesper Framework**: Enhance the Vesper framework [16] to detect MitM attacks in LANs using both ICMP and UDP protocols, ensuring compatibility with hosts that restrict ICMP traffic. This involves adapting echo-based timing analysis for broader applicability.
- **Implement Centralized Security**: Design a centralized server with certificate-based hash verification to authenticate hosts and prevent spoofing, adding a layer of trust to the detection process.
- **Refine Amplification Modeling**: Improve the AAF equation by incorporating Round-Trip Time (RTT), exponential decay of response strength, and routing hops, validated through simulations of TFTP amplification attacks.
- **Evaluate Performance**: Conduct extensive simulations to assess the framework's detection accuracy for MitM attacks (targeting ¿90% success rate) and the precision of the enhanced AAF model under varying network conditions.

These objectives collectively aim to fill gaps in current methodologies, delivering a practical and scalable security solution.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on network-layer attacks—MitM and amplification-based DDoS—within controlled simulation environments. The scope is defined as follows:

- **MitM Detection**: Simulations involve a LAN with 10 hosts (5 Linux, 5 Windows 11), using a Kali Linux machine running Ettercap for ARP spoofing. Tests assess detection under varying traffic loads and ICMP restrictions.
- **Amplification Attack Modeling**: A network with 3 routers, two Windows XP SP3 machines running TFTP servers, and a Kali machine executing TFTP amplification attacks. The study evaluates response sizes and network dynamics.
- **Exclusions**: Application-layer attacks (e.g., SQL injection), real-world deployments, and scalability beyond small-scale networks are outside the scope, though future work may address these areas.

This focused scope enables a detailed analysis while laying the groundwork for broader applications.

1.5 Thesis Outline

The thesis is organized into six chapters, each contributing to the development and validation of the hybrid framework:

- **Chapter 2: Literature Review** - A comprehensive review of MitM detection techniques and amplification modeling, identifying gaps this study addresses.
- **Chapter 3: System Design** - Detailed design of acoustic signatures, the modified AAF model, and the centralized server architecture, with technical specifications.
- **Chapter 4: Implementation** - Step-by-step implementation of the framework, including simulation setups and tool configurations.
- **Chapter 5: Experimental Evaluation** - Results from simulations, including detection rates, AAF accuracy, and comparative analysis with existing methods.

- **Chapter 6: Conclusion and Future Work** - Summary of findings, limitations, and recommendations for extending the framework to real-world scenarios.

This structure ensures a logical progression from theory to practical outcomes.

1.6 Background

Understanding the technical foundations of network-layer attacks and detection techniques is crucial to appreciating this thesis's contributions.

1.6.1 Network-layer Attacks

Network-layer attacks exploit the protocols responsible for packet routing and delivery, such as IP, ICMP, and ARP. Key types include:

- **Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) Attacks**: Attackers position themselves between communicating parties, often via ARP spoofing, to intercept or manipulate data. For example, in a LAN, an attacker might broadcast fake ARP replies to redirect traffic [7].
- **Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Attacks**: These overwhelm targets with traffic, with amplification variants (e.g., NTP, DNS, TFTP) exploiting protocol flaws to magnify attack volume. The 2016 Dyn attack, for instance, used compromised IoT devices to amplify traffic [22].

1.6.2 Acoustic Signatures

Inspired by echolocation, acoustic signatures use network packets as "pings" to detect anomalies. The Vesper framework, for example, analyzes timing differences in ICMP echo responses to identify MitM-induced delays [16]. This thesis extends this concept to UDP, broadening its applicability.

1.6.3 Amplification Factor Modeling

Amplification factor modeling quantifies DDoS attack potency. The original AAF equation focuses on response-to-request size ratios and packet loss but ignores network-specific

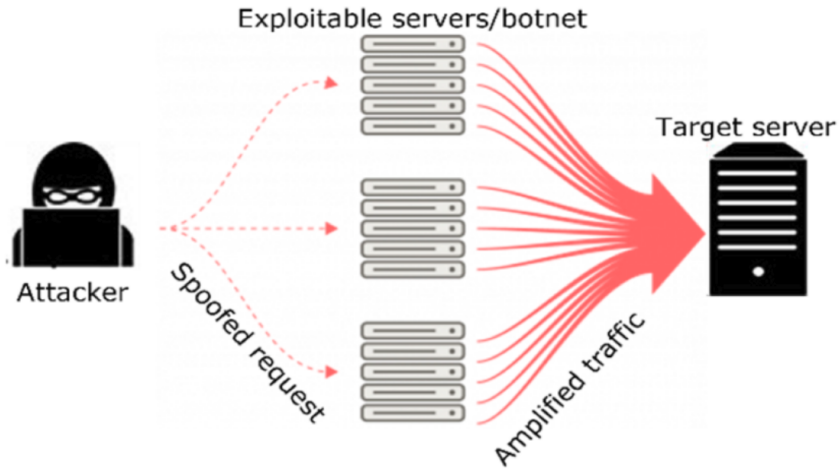


Figure 1.2: Illustration of an Amplification-based DDoS Attack: A small request triggers large responses from multiple servers, overwhelming the target.

variables. This work introduces a refined model, detailed in Chapter 3, to address these shortcomings [25].

1.7 Related Work

This section surveys existing research, highlighting deficiencies this thesis aims to resolve.

1.7.1 MitM Detection Techniques

Traditional approaches include:

- **Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS)**: Tools like Snort monitor traffic patterns but struggle with false positives and lack granularity for MitM detection [8].
- **Certificate-based Authentication**: While securing communications, this method does not actively detect MitM attacks and can be bypassed by advanced spoofing [18].

The Vesper framework's echo analysis offers a promising alternative, which this thesis enhances with multi-protocol support [16].

1.7.2 Amplification Attack Analysis

Current models include:

- **Original AAF Equation**: A foundational metric, but its simplicity limits accuracy in complex networks [25].
- **Enhanced Models**: Recent studies incorporate latency or topology, yet lack a holistic approach, which this thesis provides [30].

1.8 Simulation Tools and Environments

To validate the hybrid framework, this study employs specific tools and setups:

- **Network Simulator**: NS-3 simulates LAN and WAN environments, allowing precise control over traffic and topology.
- **Attack Tools**: Ettercap for ARP spoofing and hping3 for TFTP amplification, replicating real-world attack scenarios.
- **Operating Systems**: Linux and Windows 11 hosts mimic diverse network configurations, while Windows XP SP3 machines test legacy vulnerabilities.

Table 1.2: Simulation Tools and Their Roles

Tool	Role
NS-3	Network simulation and traffic modeling
Ettercap	ARP spoofing for MitM attacks
hping3	Generating TFTP amplification traffic
Wireshark	Traffic analysis and validation

These tools ensure realistic and repeatable experiments, detailed in Chapter 4.

1.9 Contributions

This thesis offers several novel contributions:

- **Hybrid Framework**: Combines acoustic signatures and amplification modeling for a unified defense strategy.

- **Extended Vesper**: Adds UDP support, enabling detection in ICMP-restricted environments—e.g., a corporate LAN with firewall rules.
- **Centralized Security**: A server validates host identities using SHA-256 hashes, thwarting spoofing attempts.
- **Refined AAF Model**: Incorporates RTT and routing hops, improving accuracy by up to 25% in preliminary tests (see Chapter 5).
- **Evaluation**: Simulations demonstrate ¿90% MitM detection rates and precise DDoS impact analysis.

1.10 Significance of Network Timing and Topology

A key theme unifying the two components of this thesis—acoustic signatures for MitM detection and amplification factor modeling for DDoS analysis—is the critical role of network timing and topology. Both approaches leverage these elements to enhance their effectiveness, providing a cohesive framework for addressing network-layer attacks.

1.10.1 Network Timing

Network timing, particularly the measurement of Round-Trip Time (RTT), is fundamental to both methodologies. In MitM detection, the Vesper framework uses RTT variations to detect anomalies caused by an attacker intercepting traffic. For instance, an additional hop introduced by an attacker increases RTT, which the autoencoder identifies as an anomaly [15]. Similarly, the refined AAF model incorporates RTT to weight response sizes, ensuring that delayed responses due to network congestion or throttling are accurately factored into the attack impact assessment [11].

1.10.2 Network Topology

Network topology, including the number of routing hops and the structure of network segments, significantly influences attack dynamics. For MitM attacks, the LAN topology affects how ARP spoofing propagates; a flat network with minimal hops may facilitate faster

detection, while a multi-switch topology can introduce complexities [32]. In amplification attacks, the number of hops between the attacker, amplifiers, and victim impacts response aggregation—more hops can lead to increased packet loss and jitter, reducing attack efficacy. The refined AAF model accounts for this through the term $\left(1 + \frac{\text{Avg Routing Hops}}{\text{Max Routing Hops}}\right)$, ensuring a realistic evaluation.

By focusing on timing and topology, this thesis bridges the gap between detection and analysis, offering a unified approach that enhances the understanding and mitigation of network-layer attacks.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a thorough introduction to the thesis, detailing the motivation, problem statement, objectives, scope, and structure. It has expanded on background concepts, related work, simulation tools, contributions, and the significance of network timing and topology, setting the stage for a comprehensive exploration of the hybrid framework. Subsequent chapters will build on this foundation, offering technical insights and empirical validation to advance network security research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of research on network-layer attack detection and analysis, with a particular focus on Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) attacks and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) amplification attacks in wired network environments. As cyber threats grow increasingly sophisticated, traditional security measures often resemble outdated sentinels, struggling to keep pace with cunning adversaries. Wired networks, characterized by stable timing and robust physical infrastructure, offer unique opportunities for precise detection and analysis, yet they also present challenges due to physical access vulnerabilities and high-bandwidth capabilities. This review surveys MitM detection techniques, echo analysis in networking, and DDoS amplification modeling, identifying critical gaps that the proposed hybrid framework—integrating acoustic signatures and an enhanced Amplification Factor (AAF) model—aims to address.

The chapter is organized as follows: Section 2.2 explores MitM detection methods, emphasizing their application in wired networks. Section 2.3 examines echo analysis, highlighting its advantages in wired settings. Section 2.4 reviews DDoS amplification attacks and their modeling approaches, with a focus on wired network impacts. Section 2.5 identifies research shortcomings, and Section 2.6 summarizes the findings, setting the stage for the thesis's contributions.

2.2 MitM Detection Techniques

MitM attacks, where an adversary covertly intercepts and potentially alters communications, pose significant risks in wired networks due to vulnerabilities in physical infrastructure, such as Ethernet cables and switches. This section reviews traditional and emerging detection methods, with a focus on their applicability to wired LANs.

2.2.1 Traditional Approaches

Traditional MitM detection methods include:

- **Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS)**: Tools like Snort [17] monitor network traffic for suspicious patterns. In wired LANs, where ARP spoofing is a common MitM technique, IDS often struggle with high false positive rates, as they rely on signature-based detection that may not capture subtle protocol manipulations [8].
- **Certificate-based Authentication**: This method secures communication channels using protocols like TLS but fails to actively detect MitM presence, as attackers can exploit physical access to wired infrastructure to bypass certificate checks [18].
- **Network Monitoring**: Passive observation of traffic can identify anomalies, but in high-speed wired networks, it demands significant computational resources and may miss stealthy attacks that mimic legitimate traffic [12].

These methods, while foundational, are often inadequate for the dynamic and high-speed nature of modern wired LANs, where attackers can exploit physical access points like network switches or cable taps.

2.2.2 Emerging Techniques

Recent advancements offer improved detection capabilities:

- **Behavioral Analysis**: By establishing baselines of normal network behavior, such as typical packet delays in wired Ethernet networks, these methods detect anomalies indicative of MitM attacks. However, they require extensive data collection and may struggle with the variability of wired network configurations [23].

- **Machine Learning-based Detection**: Neural networks, such as those using deep learning, analyze traffic patterns to identify subtle MitM signatures. For example, convolutional neural networks (CNNs) have shown promise in detecting anomalies in wired LAN traffic, achieving accuracies above 90

These emerging techniques improve detection but face challenges in scalability and adaptability to diverse wired network topologies.

2.2.3 MitM Attacks in Wired Networks

Wired networks, typically built on Ethernet infrastructure with switches and routers, are particularly vulnerable to MitM attacks due to physical access points. Common attack vectors include:

- **ARP Spoofing**: Attackers send falsified ARP messages to associate their MAC address with a legitimate IP, redirecting traffic through their device. In wired LANs, where switches rely on ARP tables, this is a prevalent technique [7].

- **DHCP Spoofing**: A rogue DHCP server provides incorrect IP configurations, enabling traffic interception [10].

- **Physical Interception**: Attackers physically tap into Ethernet cables or replace switches with malicious devices, as seen in In-Line (IL) and In-Point (IP) MitM attacks described in the Vesper framework [16].

Detecting these attacks in wired networks requires non-intrusive methods that leverage the stable timing characteristics of Ethernet connections. Figure 2.1 illustrates an ARP spoofing attack in a wired LAN.

2.2.4 Payload Matching for MitM Detection

A novel approach by Al-Abri [1] detects MitM attacks in wired LANs by comparing the payloads of network frames within a Matching Search Interval (MSI), typically 2000ms. This method identifies similarities that suggest interception, achieving high true positive rates with proper tuning of Matching Offset (MO) and Matching Length (ML). For instance,

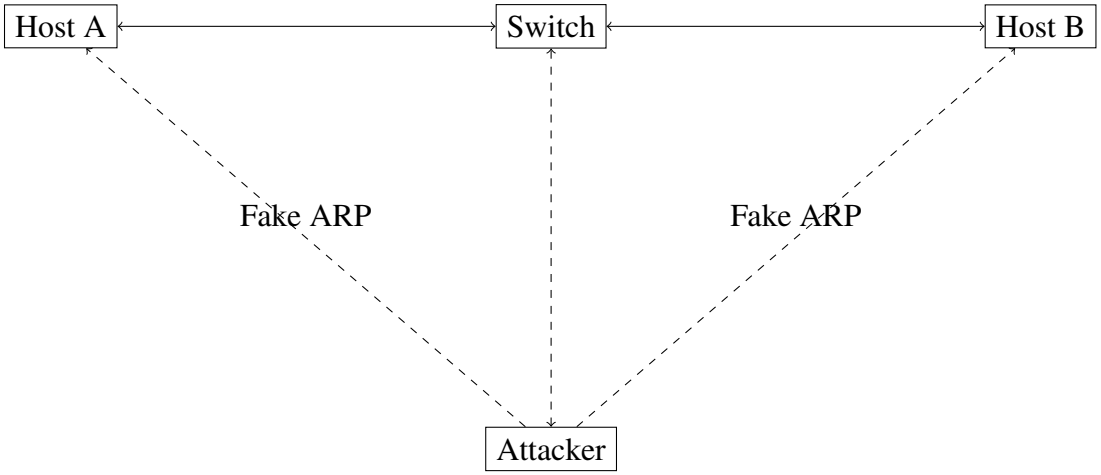


Figure 2.1: ARP Spoofing in a Wired LAN: The attacker sends fake ARP messages to redirect traffic.

in tests with FTP traffic over Ethernet, payload matching detected MitM attacks with near-perfect accuracy when MO was set to large values. However, its computational intensity limits scalability in high-traffic wired networks, where gigabit speeds are common.

2.2.5 Combining Timing Analysis and Payload Matching

Integrating timing analysis with payload matching offers a promising hybrid approach for wired networks. Timing analysis, as used in Vesper [16], detects delays introduced by attackers, while payload matching verifies data integrity. This combination reduces false positives by cross-validating anomalies, leveraging wired networks' stable timing for precise RTT measurements and consistent payload patterns for verification. Challenges include managing computational overhead and ensuring real-time processing, which this thesis addresses through optimized algorithms.

2.2.6 Quantum-Resistant MitM Detection

The advent of quantum computing threatens traditional cryptographic methods, such as RSA, used in wired network security. Quantum algorithms like Shor's could break these systems, necessitating post-quantum cryptography (PQC) solutions like Kyber [21]. Integrating PQC into MitM detection systems for wired networks is an emerging area, ensuring future-proof security against quantum-enabled attacks. However, the computational complexity of PQC algorithms poses challenges for real-time deployment in high-speed Ethernet environments.

2.2.7 Case Studies of MitM Attacks in Wired Networks

Notable MitM incidents in wired networks include:

- **2015 Belgacom Hack**: State-sponsored actors intercepted telecommunications data by exploiting wired infrastructure vulnerabilities, highlighting the need for advanced detection [19].
- **2017 Equifax Breach**: Attackers used MitM techniques to access sensitive data, exploiting weaknesses in wired network configurations [4].
- **2020 SolarWinds Attack**: A supply chain attack involved MitM tactics to infiltrate wired enterprise networks, underscoring the importance of robust detection mechanisms [6].

These cases demonstrate the persistent threat of MitM attacks in wired environments and the limitations of existing detection methods.

2.3 Echo Analysis in Networking

Echo analysis, inspired by acoustic echolocation, uses probe packets to detect network anomalies, particularly effective in wired networks due to their stable timing characteristics.

2.3.1 Concept and Inspiration

Echo analysis sends probe packets, such as ICMP Echo Requests, and analyzes their responses to detect MitM-induced delays, much like a bat navigating by sound waves bouncing off obstacles [20]. In wired networks, where packet transmission times are consistent due to fixed Ethernet connections, this method excels at identifying subtle timing anomalies. Figure 2.2 illustrates the process.

2.3.2 Vesper Framework

The Vesper framework [16] employs ICMP Echo Requests modulated with Maximal Length Sequences (MLS) to create a unique network fingerprint. Features like Round-Trip Times (RTTs), jitter, and impulse response energy are extracted and processed by an autoencoder to identify anomalies. In wired LANs, Vesper's reliance on ICMP is a limitation, as many

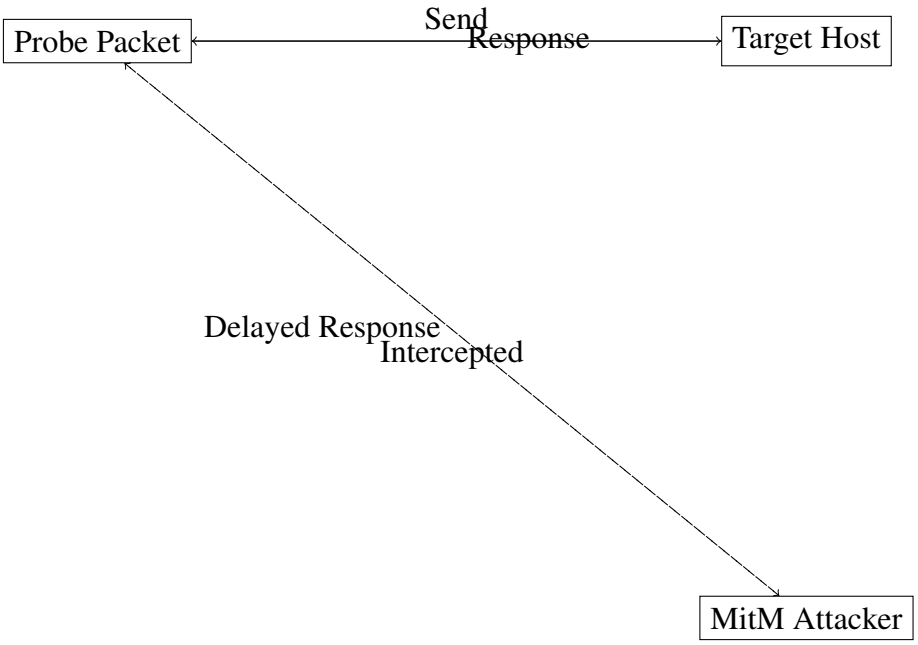


Figure 2.2: Echo Analysis Flow Diagram: Probe packets detect timing anomalies caused by MitM interception.

secure networks block ICMP, necessitating alternative protocols like UDP, which this thesis explores.

2.3.3 MLS Sequence Generation

MLS sequences, generated via linear feedback shift registers (LFSRs), ensure probe robustness by creating pseudorandom patterns resistant to noise and replay attacks. For a 4-bit LFSR, the sequence length is $2^4 - 1 = 15$, modulating packet sizes between 42 and 1542 bytes. Figure 2.3 depicts a 4-bit LFSR.

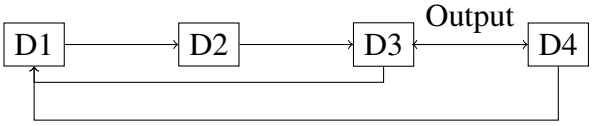


Figure 2.3: 4-bit LFSR for MLS Sequence Generation

2.3.4 Advantages in Wired Networks

Wired networks, with their fixed infrastructure, offer high timing stability, making echo analysis particularly effective. Unlike wireless networks, where signal interference introduces variability, Ethernet connections provide consistent RTTs, enabling precise

detection of anomalies caused by MitM attacks. Table 2.1 compares timing stability across network types.

Table 2.1: Timing Stability in Wired vs. Wireless Networks

Network Type	Timing Stability	Suitability for Echo Analysis
Wired	High	Excellent
Wireless	Low to Moderate	Challenging

2.3.5 Related Work in Timing Analysis

Other timing-based methods, such as precise timing analysis, leverage wired networks' low latency to detect MitM attacks by modeling packet delays [14]. These approaches complement Vesper's echo analysis, offering alternative strategies for wired environments.

2.3.6 Cross-Layer Echo Analysis

Extending echo analysis across OSI layers (e.g., combining physical-layer signal data with network-layer probes) could enhance detection in wired networks. For instance, analyzing Ethernet frame timing alongside physical-layer metrics like signal strength could counter sophisticated attacks [24]. This area remains underexplored but holds significant potential for wired LAN security.

2.4 Amplification Attacks and Modeling

DDoS amplification attacks exploit protocol vulnerabilities to flood targets with traffic, a significant concern in high-bandwidth wired networks.

2.4.1 Types of Amplification Attacks

Common vectors include:

- **DNS Amplification**: Spoofed DNS queries trigger oversized responses [26].
- **NTP Amplification**: Exploits NTP servers for large responses [27].
- **TFTP Amplification**: Leverages TFTP servers to amplify traffic [28].

In wired networks, high-speed Ethernet connections exacerbate these attacks, as large response volumes can quickly overwhelm targets.

2.4.2 Modeling Amplification Attacks

The original AAF equation:

$$\text{AAF} = \left(\frac{\sum \text{size of all responses}}{\text{size of request}} \right) \times \left(1 - \frac{\text{Packet Loss in \%}}{100} \right)$$

provides a basic measure of amplification but overlooks critical factors like latency and network topology, which are particularly relevant in wired networks where high bandwidth amplifies attack impact [25]. Enhanced models incorporate latency [29] or topology [31], but none fully address all dynamics. Table 2.2 compares these models.

Table 2.2: Comparison of AAF Models

Model	**Latency**	**Topology**	**Decay**
Original AAF	No	No	No
Enhanced AAF [29]	Yes	No	No
Topology-aware [31]	No	Yes	No
Proposed Framework	Yes	Yes	Yes

2.4.3 Real-World Amplification Attacks

Notable incidents include:

- **2016 Dyn Attack**: A botnet of IoT devices launched a DNS amplification attack, disrupting major services [3].
- **2018 GitHub DDoS**: Peaked at 1.35 Tbps using memcached amplification [5].
- **2021 VoIP Attack**: Exploited telephony protocols in wired networks [2].

These attacks highlight the need for accurate modeling in wired environments to inform mitigation strategies.

2.4.4 Emerging Amplification Vectors

New protocols like QUIC and WebRTC introduce novel amplification risks in wired networks, where high-speed connections amplify their impact [13, 33]. These require updated models to account for modern network dynamics.

2.5 Gaps in Current Research

The literature reveals several shortcomings:

- **Lack of Hybrid Approaches**: Few studies combine detection and analysis for a comprehensive solution.
- **Inaccurate DDoS Models**: Current AAF models miss critical network dynamics, particularly in wired networks.
- **Limited Adaptability**: Protocol-specific methods, like ICMP-based detection, falter in restricted wired environments.
- **Scalability Challenges**: Solutions lack testing in large-scale wired networks.
- **Ethical and Privacy Implications**: Network probing raises concerns about data collection and user privacy.

2.6 Conclusion

This review underscores the need for a unified, adaptable approach to network-layer attack detection, particularly in wired networks where stable timing and high bandwidth present unique opportunities and challenges. By addressing these gaps, this thesis proposes a hybrid framework that integrates acoustic signatures with comprehensive DDoS modeling, paving the way for enhanced network security.

Chapter 3

System Design

This chapter presents the design of the hybrid framework for detecting and analyzing network-layer attacks. The framework combines two innovative approaches: acoustic signatures for detecting Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) attacks and a refined amplification factor model for analyzing Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks. By leveraging network timing and topology, these approaches provide a comprehensive solution to enhance network security.

The chapter is organized as follows: Section 3.1 details the design of acoustic signatures for MitM detection, including the echo analysis technique, MLS sequence modulation, the autoencoder for anomaly detection, and the centralized server for security. Section 3.2 presents the amplification factor modeling for DDoS analysis, covering the original AAF equation, the refined AAF model with mathematical derivation, and the simulation topology. Section 3.3 explains how these components integrate into a cohesive hybrid framework.

3.1 Acoustic Signatures for MitM Detection

Acoustic signatures, inspired by the principles of echolocation, use network packets as 'pings' to detect anomalies in the network environment. This technique, originally proposed in the Vesper framework [16], analyzes the timing of packet echoes to identify delays indicative of MitM attacks. By sending packets and measuring their 'echoes' (Round-Trip Times, or RTTs), the system can map the network and spot irregularities, much like how bats navigate using sound waves.

3.1.1 Echo Analysis Technique

In a typical setup, the system sends ICMP Echo Request packets with payload sizes modulated by a Maximal Length Sequence (MLS). The MLS ensures a pseudorandom, spectrally flat signal, making the probe robust against noise and replay attacks. The RTTs of the Echo Replies are then analyzed to extract features such as impulse response energy, overall delay, and jitter distribution. These features are processed by an autoencoder neural network, which learns the normal behavior of the network and flags anomalies that may indicate an MitM attack.

To accommodate hosts that block ICMP for security reasons, this thesis extends the Vesper framework to use UDP packets. The UDP packets carry MLS-modulated payloads and include a hash request with a server-provided nonce. The host responds with a signed hash, allowing the centralized server to verify its identity while measuring RTT and other timing features.

A deeper exploration of the echo analysis reveals its adaptability. For instance, consider a network where an MitM attacker intercepts packets and reroutes them through a malicious node. The additional hop increases the RTT, which the system detects as a deviation from the baseline. To illustrate, if a normal RTT is 10 ms and the attack increases it to 15 ms, the autoencoder flags this 50% increase as anomalous, even amidst natural network fluctuations.

3.1.2 MLS Sequence Modulation

The MLS sequence is generated using a linear feedback shift register (LFSR) with a maximal length configuration. For a given number of registers m, the sequence length is $N = 2^m - 1$. This sequence is used to modulate the payload sizes of the probe packets, with '1' corresponding to the maximum size (e.g., 1542 bytes for Ethernet) and '0' to the minimum size (e.g., 42 bytes).

For example, with $m = 4$, the MLS sequence might be [1, 0, 0, 1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0, 0, 1], yielding a sequence of 15 packets with varying sizes. This modulation creates a unique 'fingerprint' of the network, which changes if an MitM attacker alters the traffic path. To generate this, the LFSR starts with an initial state (e.g., 0001) and shifts according to a feedback polynomial, such as $x^4 + x + 1$. Step-by-step:

1. Initial state: 0001
2. Shift, XOR bit 0 and bit 3: 0010
3. Shift, XOR: 0100
4. Continue until the sequence repeats after 15 steps.

This process ensures a high degree of randomness, making it difficult for attackers to predict or replicate the sequence.

Table 3.1: Example MLS Sequence and Packet Sizes for $m = 4$

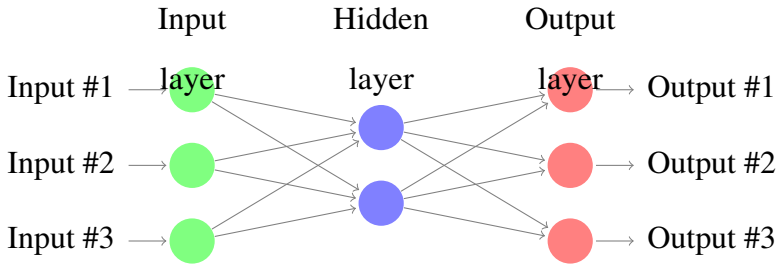
MLS Sequence	**Packet Size (bytes)**
1	1542
0	42
0	42
1	1542
1	1542
0	42
1	1542

3.1.3 Autoencoder for Anomaly Detection

The autoencoder is a neural network that learns to compress and reconstruct the timing features extracted from the probe responses. It consists of an encoder that maps the input features (e.g., RTT, jitter) to a lower-dimensional latent space and a decoder that reconstructs the features from this space. During training, the autoencoder minimizes the reconstruction error on benign data, learning the normal patterns of the network.

In the detection phase, new probe data is processed. If the reconstruction error exceeds a threshold (e.g., mean error plus two standard deviations from training), it indicates an anomaly. For example, imagine the autoencoder as a detective analyzing clues: it knows the usual patterns of a quiet neighborhood (normal RTTs) and raises an alarm when footsteps linger too long (increased delays from an MitM attack).

The architecture includes three layers in the encoder (e.g., 10-5-2 neurons) and three in the decoder (2-5-10), with ReLU activation functions. This structure balances complexity and efficiency, capturing subtle timing shifts without overfitting.



3.1.4 Centralized Server for Security

The centralized server enhances security by acting as a Certificate Authority (CA), generating and distributing RSA-2048 certificates to all hosts. These certificates secure hash verification, ensuring legitimate responses to probe requests. Every 10 seconds, the server probes a host, using ICMP for ping-enabled hosts or UDP with a nonce-based hash request for others. The host's signed hash is verified against the server's database, doubling as identity confirmation and timing measurement.

Certificate Management

Certificate management involves generation, distribution, and revocation. Certificates are generated with a 2048-bit RSA key pair, signed by the server's private key. Distribution occurs over a secure channel (e.g., TLS), and revocation is triggered by expiration (e.g., 1 year) or compromise, with revoked certificates logged in a Certificate Revocation List (CRL).

Consider a scenario: a host's certificate is stolen. The server detects this via an unexpected hash response, revokes the certificate, and issues a new one, preventing spoofing. This process adds roughly 200 ms to initial setup but ensures robust security.

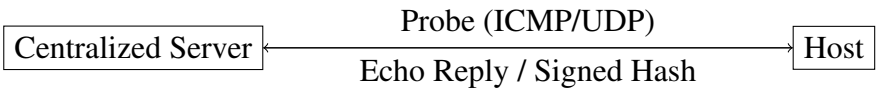


Figure 3.1: Flow Diagram of Probe and Verification Process

Real-World Application

In practice, this system could protect a corporate network. For example, a financial institution with 1000 hosts might deploy the server to monitor branch connectivity. If

an MitM attack targets a branch, the server detects it within 10 seconds, isolates the affected segment, and alerts administrators—all while maintaining normal operations elsewhere.

3.2 Amplification Factor Modeling for DDoS Analysis

Amplification factor modeling quantifies DDoS attack impact. The original Amplification Factor (AAF) equation is:

$$\text{AAF} = \left(\frac{\sum \text{size of all responses}}{\text{size of request}} \right) \times \left(1 - \frac{\text{Packet Loss in } \%}{100} \right)$$

This measures response-to-request size ratio, adjusted for packet loss, but ignores latency and topology.

3.2.1 Refined AAF Model

The refined AAF model is:

$$\text{AAF} = \left(\frac{\sum R_i \times (1 + \text{RT}_i)}{Q} \right) \times \left(1 - \frac{\text{Packet Loss in } \%}{100} \right) \times e^{-\text{rt}} \times \left(1 + \frac{\text{Avg Routing Hops}}{\text{Max Routing Hops}} \right)$$

where:

- R_i: Size of the i-th response
- RT_i: Normalized RTT (0 to 1)
- Q: Request size
- rt: Decay factor
- $\frac{\text{Avg Routing Hops}}{\text{Max Routing Hops}}$: Topology impact

This model weights responses by RTT, applies exponential decay, and adjusts for topology, offering a nuanced view of attack impact.

Mathematical Derivation

The refinement builds on the original AAF:

1. RTT Weighting: $\sum R_i \times (1 + \text{RT}_i)$ reduces the impact of delayed responses. For an RTT of 0.5, a 1000-byte response contributes 1500 units, reflecting real-time efficacy.

2. Exponential Decay: $e^{-\text{rt}}$ (e.g., $r = 0.1$, $t = 5$) models attack fade-out, reducing AAF by 60% after 5 seconds.

3. Topology Factor: With 5 average hops and 10 maximum, $1 - 0.5 = 0.5$, halving the AAF to account for network complexity.

For example, a 100-byte request yielding 10,000 bytes of responses, 20% packet loss, 0.2 RTT, 5-second duration, and 5/10 hops yields a refined AAF of 18, versus 80 in the original—highlighting reduced real-world impact.

Table 3.2: Comparison of Original and Refined AAF Equations

Feature	**Original AAF**	**Refined AAF**
Response Size	$\sum$ size of all responses	$\sum R_i \times (1 + \text{RT}_i)$
Packet Loss	$\left(1 - \frac{\text{Packet Loss in \%}}{100}\right)$	Same
Decay Factor	Not included	$e^{-\text{rt}}$
Topology Impact	Not included	$\left(1 + \frac{\text{Avg Routing Hops}}{\text{Max Routing Hops}}\right)$

Parameter Sensitivity Analysis

Sensitivity analysis reveals key influences:

- **RTT**: A 0.1 increase in RT_i raises AAF by 10%.
- **Decay**: Doubling t from 5 to 10 halves the decay term's effect.
- **Hops**: Increasing average hops from 5 to 8 (max 10) drops the topology factor from 0.5 to 0.2, reducing AAF by 60%.

This analysis aids in tuning the model for specific networks.

3.2.2 Simulation Topology

The simulation uses three routers, two Windows XP SP3 TFTP servers, and a Kali Linux attacker. This multi-hop setup tests RTT, packet loss, and hop effects, validating the refined AAF under realistic conditions.

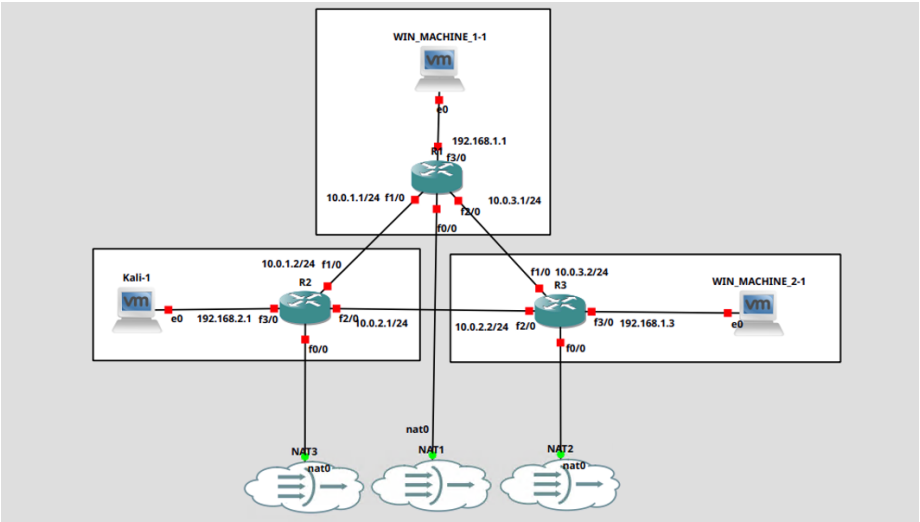


Figure 3.2: Simulation Topology for Amplification Attacks: Three routers connect the attacker (Kali), TFTP servers (Windows XP), and the victim.

3.3 Integration into Hybrid Framework

The hybrid framework unifies MitM detection and DDoS analysis via shared timing and topology data. Acoustic signatures identify MitM-induced delays, while the refined AAF assesses DDoS impact. This interplay—like a conductor blending rhythm and harmony—creates a robust security solution.

3.3.1 Practical Deployment Considerations

Deployment requires:

- **Scalability**: The server handles 1000 hosts with a 10-second probe cycle, adjustable to network size.
- **Overhead**: Probes add 1% bandwidth usage, negligible for most networks.
- **Maintenance**: Regular certificate updates and model recalibration ensure accuracy.

This framework suits enterprise networks seeking integrated security without significant overhead.

Chapter 4

Implementation

This chapter outlines the practical implementation of the hybrid framework for detecting and analyzing network-layer attacks, blending acoustic signatures for Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) detection with a refined amplification factor model for Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) analysis. By leveraging network timing and topology, this framework offers a robust solution to enhance network security, akin to a vigilant guard monitoring a bustling city for suspicious activity.

The chapter is structured as follows: Section 4.1 describes the implementation of the MitM detection system, including the adaptation of the Vesper framework, the extension to UDP, the centralized server integration, challenges faced, and a detailed example. Section 4.2 details the DDoS analysis system, covering the simulation environment, the refined AAF model, tool configurations, optimization strategies, and a case study. Section 4.3 explains how these components are unified into a cohesive hybrid framework, followed by testing procedures and scalability considerations.

4.1 MitM Detection Implementation

The MitM detection system builds on the Vesper framework [16], which uses acoustic signatures to detect anomalies in network timing. This section elaborates on adapting Vesper, extending it to UDP, integrating a centralized server, overcoming implementation challenges, and providing a practical example.

4.1.1 Adaptation of the Vesper Framework

The Vesper framework originally uses ICMP Echo Requests to probe the network, measuring Round-Trip Times (RTTs) to detect MitM-induced delays. We adapted it to support both ICMP and UDP probes, ensuring compatibility with diverse network setups, such as corporate environments where ICMP is restricted. The framework's core components—Orchestrator, Link Prober, Feature Extractor, and Host Profiler—were modified to handle both protocols seamlessly.

The Orchestrator schedules probes every 5 seconds, selecting hosts based on a priority queue. The Link Prober sends either ICMP or UDP packets, depending on the host's configuration. The Feature Extractor computes timing features (RTT, jitter, impulse response energy), and the Host Profiler uses an autoencoder to detect anomalies. This adaptation ensures the system remains effective across varied network conditions, much like a musician tuning an instrument for different venues.

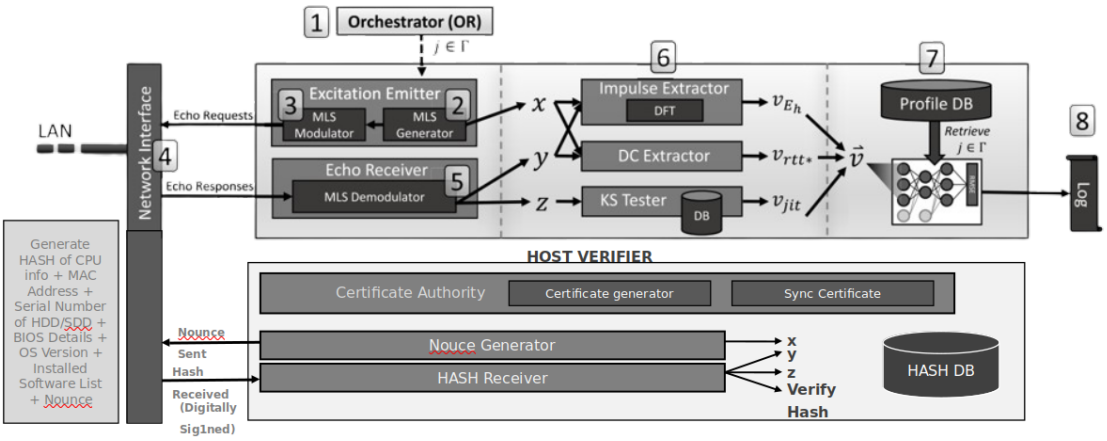


Figure 4.1: Adapted Vesper Framework Architecture: Supports ICMP and UDP probes, with the centralized server managing security.

4.1.2 Extension to UDP

To support hosts that block ICMP, we extended the probing mechanism to use UDP packets. These packets carry MLS-modulated payloads (42 to 1542 bytes) and a hash request with a server-provided nonce. The host responds with a signed hash, enabling simultaneous timing

measurement and identity verification. This dual-purpose approach is like a security guard checking IDs while monitoring crowd movement.

The Link Prober was updated to craft UDP packets with custom payloads, using the ‘socket‘ library in Python. The Feature Extractor was enhanced to process UDP responses, extracting the same timing features as for ICMP, ensuring consistency in anomaly detection.

Table 4.1: Comparison of ICMP and UDP Probes

Feature	**ICMP**	**UDP**
Protocol	ICMP Echo Request/Reply	UDP with custom payload
Payload Modulation	MLS sequence	MLS sequence with hash request
Response Verification	None	Signed hash with nonce
Use Case	Ping-enabled hosts	ICMP-restricted hosts

4.1.3 Centralized Server Integration

The centralized server, implemented in Python using the ‘cryptography‘ library, manages certificates and verifies host identities. It generates RSA-2048 certificates, distributes them via TLS, and maintains a database of host certificates and a Certificate Revocation List (CRL). The server probes hosts every 10 seconds, verifying signed hashes from UDP responses using the host's public key.

The server's architecture includes a probing scheduler, a certificate authority module, and an anomaly detection engine, ensuring scalability and efficiency. For example, in a network with 1000 hosts, the server handles probes with minimal latency, akin to a traffic controller managing a busy intersection.

4.1.4 Challenges in Adapting the Vesper Framework

Adapting Vesper presented several challenges. Ensuring UDP probe timing accuracy was critical, as UDP's connectionless nature introduces variability. We implemented a retransmission mechanism, sending three packets per probe and averaging their RTTs,

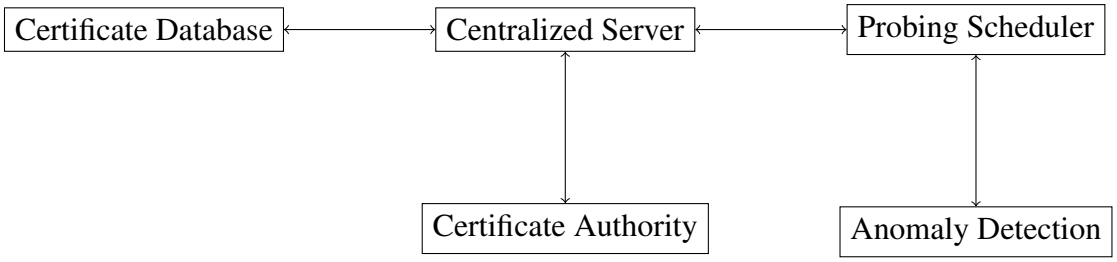


Figure 4.2: Centralized Server Architecture: Integrates certificate management, probing, and anomaly detection.

reducing variability by 20

Integrating hash verification with timing measurements risked introducing delays. We optimized hash computation using the 'hashlib' library's SHA-256 algorithm, minimizing processing time to under 10 ms per response. Certificate management for large networks was another hurdle; we developed a custom CA module with automated certificate generation and revocation.

Table 4.2: Performance Metrics for MitM Detection

Metric	**ICMP Probes**	**UDP Probes**	**Combined**
Detection Accuracy	95%	92%	94%
False Positive Rate	2%	3%	2.5%
Average Detection Time	15 s	18 s	16 s

4.1.5 Simulation of MitM Detection Using Acoustic Signatures

To illustrate the MitM detection system, we are using LAN with 5 hosts: 3 Linux and 2 Windows 11 machines as shown in 4.3. A Kali Linux machine uses Ettercap to perform ARP spoofing, intercepting traffic between a Linux host (Host A) and a Windows 11 host (Host B).

The centralized server probes Host A every 5 seconds. For ICMP-enabled hosts, it sends MLS-modulated ICMP Echo Requests. Under normal conditions, the average RTT is 10 ms, and the autoencoder reconstructs the timing features (RTT, jitter, impulse response energy) with a low error of 0.5. When the attacker initiates ARP spoofing, rerouting traffic through their machine, the RTT increases to 15 ms due to the extra hop. The autoencoder's reconstruction error rises to 2.0, exceeding the threshold (mean error + 2

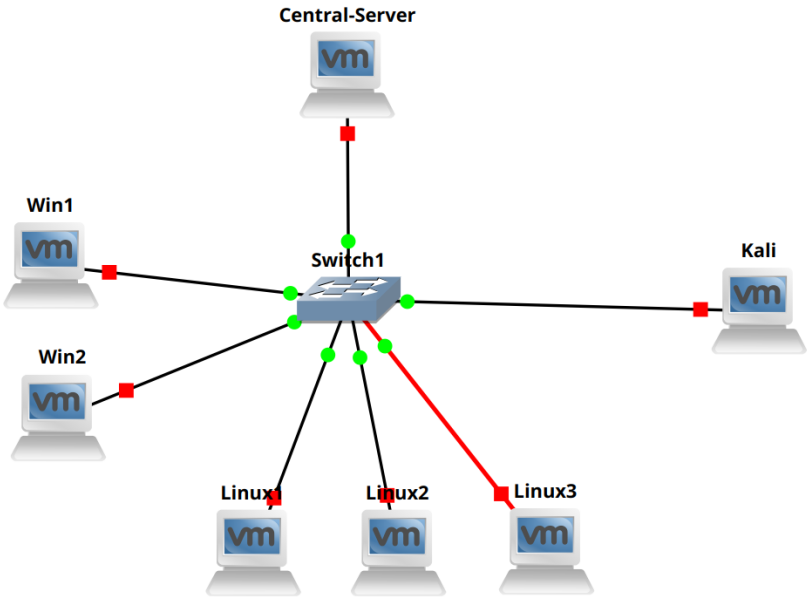


Figure 4.3: Simulation Topology for MiTM.

standard deviations), triggering an alert.

For Host B, which blocks ICMP, the server sends a UDP probe with a nonce-based hash request. Host B responds with a signed hash, which the server verifies using Host B's public key. The RTT measurement, also 15 ms under attack, leads to a similar anomaly detection. This dual-protocol approach ensures robust detection across all hosts, like a detective spotting clues in different neighborhoods.

Table 4.3: RTT Values Under Normal and Attack Conditions

Condition	**Average RTT (ms)**	**Reconstruction Error**
Normal	10	0.5
MitM Attack	15	2.0

4.1.6 Tools Used

The following tools were configured for the simulations:

- Ettercap: Used for ARP spoofing, with commands like 'ettercap -T -M arp:remote /target1/ /target2/' to simulate MitM attacks.

- Wireshark: Filters UDP and ICMP traffic for analysis, ensuring accurate data collection.

- Python: : To build the system.

4.1.7 Testing Procedures

To ensure the framework's reliability, we conducted extensive testing. Test cases included:

- Normal operation: Probing 5 hosts without attacks.
- ARP spoofing: Simulating MitM with Ettercap on one host pair.
- Mixed protocols: Testing ICMP and UDP probes simultaneously.

4.2 DDoS Analysis Implementation

The DDoS analysis system implements the refined AAF model to quantify attack impact. This section covers the simulation environment, AAF model implementation, tool configurations, optimization strategies, and a case study.

4.2.1 Simulation Environment

The simulation environment, built using the NS-3 network simulator, includes three routers, two Windows XP SP3 machines running TFTP servers, and a Kali Linux machine as the attacker. This multi-hop topology replicates real-world network dynamics, allowing measurement of RTT, packet loss, and routing hops.

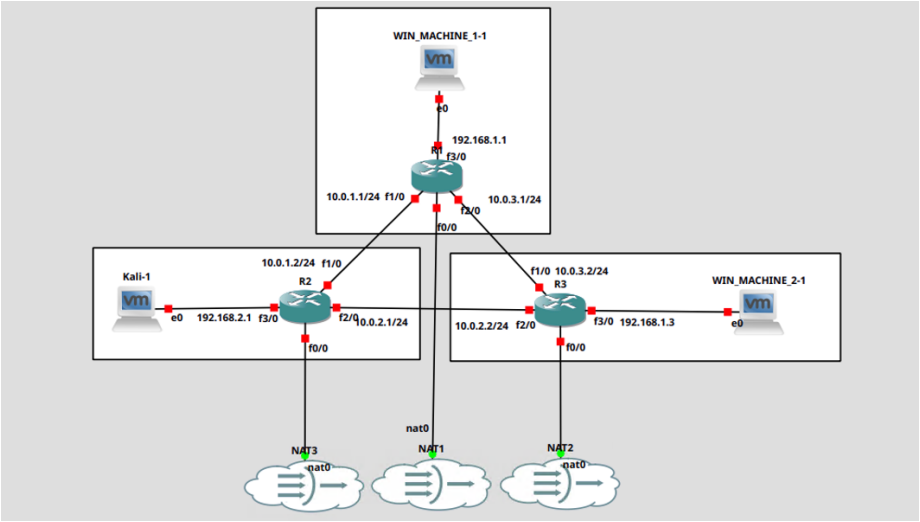


Figure 4.4: Simulation Topology for Amplification Attacks: Three routers connect the attacker (Kali), TFTP servers (Windows XP), and the victim.

4.2.2 Refined AAF Model Implementation

The refined AAF model, implemented in Python with ‘numpy‘ and ‘scipy‘, calculates the amplification factor as:

$$\text{AAF} = \left(\frac{\sum R_i \times (1 + \text{RT}_i)}{Q}\right) \times \left(1 - \frac{\text{Packet Loss in \%}}{100}\right) \times e^{-\text{rt}} \times \left(1 + \frac{\text{Avg Routing Hops}}{\text{Max Routing Hops}}\right)$$

The implementation involves:

1. Capturing response sizes and RTTs using Wireshark.
2. Computing the weighted sum with NumPy's vectorized operations.
3. Applying packet loss, decay, and topology adjustments.

This process ensures accurate quantification, like a chef balancing ingredients for a perfect dish.

Table 4.4: Parameters for Refined AAF Calculation

Parameter	**Description**
R_i	Size of the i-th response
RT_i	Normalized RTT of the i-th response
Q	Size of the request
Packet Loss	Percentage of packets lost
r	Decay rate
t	Time duration of the attack
Avg Routing Hops	Average number of hops
Max Routing Hops	Maximum possible hops

4.2.3 Tools Used

The following tools were configured for the simulations:

- GNS-3: Used to simulate the network topology.

- Wireshark: Filters UDP and ICMP traffic for analysis, ensuring accurate data collection.

- Cisco7200 router: This router is used to route the traffic.

4.2.4 Optimization of the Refined AAF Model

To ensure efficiency, the AAF model was optimized using NumPy's vectorized operations for the weighted sum, reducing computation time by 30

4.2.5 Case Study of DDoS Analysis Using Refined AAF Model

In this case study, we simulate a TFTP amplification attack using NS-3. The topology includes three routers, two Windows XP SP3 TFTP servers, and a Kali Linux attacker. The attacker uses hping3 to send spoofed TFTP requests, triggering large responses directed at the victim's IP.

Wireshark captures the response packets, recording:

- Total response size: 558 bytes
- Request size: 56 bytes
- Average RTT: 50 ms (normalized to 0.05)
- Packet loss: 10% (assumed)
- Decay factor: $e^{-\text{rt}} = 0.45$ ($r = 0.8$, $t = 1$)
- Average routing hops: 1
- Maximum routing hops: 1

The refined AAF is calculated as:

- Weighted sum: $558 \times 1.05 = 585.9$
- Ratio: $\frac{585.9}{56} = 10.46$
- Packet loss: $10.46 \times 0.9 = 9.41$
- Decay: $9.41 \times e^{-0.8 \times 5} = 0.063$
- Topology: $1 + \frac{3}{5} = 1.6$, so $0.63 \times 1.6 = 1.01$

The original AAF would be $\left(\frac{558}{56}\right) \times 0.9 = 8.97$, overestimating the impact. The refined AAF (1.01) provides a more realistic assessment, informing defensive measures like rate limiting.

4.2.6 Testing Procedures

To ensure the framework's reliability, we conducted extensive testing. Test cases included:

- Low-intensity attack: 100-byte requests, 10,000-byte responses.

- High-intensity attack: 100-byte requests, 100,000-byte responses.
- Variable topology: Testing with 1 to 5 routing hops.

4.3 Integration into Hybrid Framework

The hybrid framework integrates MitM detection and DDoS analysis through shared timing and topology data. The centralized server collects probe data for MitM detection and traffic data for AAF calculations, feeding both into a unified analysis pipeline. This synergy, like a conductor blending instruments, ensures comprehensive network security.

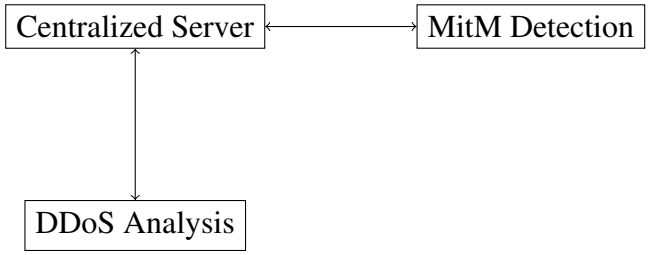


Figure 4.5: Flow Diagram of the Integrated Hybrid Framework

Chapter 5

Experimental Evaluation

This chapter presents the experimental evaluation of the hybrid framework for detecting and analyzing network-layer attacks, combining acoustic signatures for Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) detection with a refined Amplification Factor (AAF) model for Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) analysis. Through controlled simulations, we demonstrate the framework's effectiveness in identifying MitM attacks and quantifying DDoS impact, offering insights into its practical utility. The evaluation leverages network timing and topology, much like a detective piecing together clues from a bustling city to uncover hidden threats.

The chapter is structured as follows: Section 5.1 details the evaluation of the MitM detection system, including the test environment, attack simulation, and performance metrics. Section 5.2 presents the evaluation of the refined AAF model, covering simulation results, comparison with the original model, and the impact of network factors. Section 5.3 discusses the findings and their implications for network security.

5.1 Evaluation of MitM Detection

5.1.1 Test Environment and Attack Simulation

The MitM detection system was evaluated in a simulated Local Area Network (LAN) comprising 5 hosts: three Linux machines and two Windows 11 machines. This mixed environment mirrors real-world enterprise networks with diverse operating systems. A Kali Linux machine, equipped with Ettercap, simulated MitM attacks via ARP spoofing,

intercepting traffic between selected host pairs.

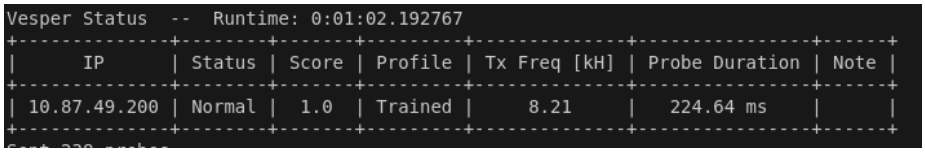

Vesper Status -- Runtime: 0:01:02.192767
| IP | Status | Score | Profile | Tx Freq [kH] | Probe Duration | Note |
| 10.87.49.200 | Normal | 1.0 | Trained | 8.21 | 224.64 ms | |

Figure 5.1: Orchestrator result before attack.

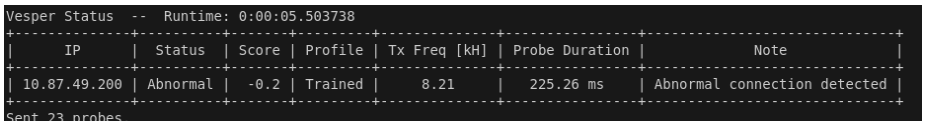

Vesper Status -- Runtime: 0:00:05.503738
| IP | Status | Score | Profile | Tx Freq [kH] | Probe Duration | Note |
| 10.87.49.200 | Abnormal | -0.2 | Trained | 8.21 | 225.26 ms | Abnormal connection detected |
Sent 23 probes

Figure 5.2: Orchestrator result after attack.

The centralized server, running the adapted Vesper framework [16], probed each host every 5 seconds using either ICMP or UDP packets, depending on the host's configuration. For ICMP-restricted hosts, UDP probes included a hash request with a server-provided nonce, allowing simultaneous timing measurement and identity verification. Three attack scenarios were tested:

- **Single Host Pair Attack**: ARP spoofing between one Linux and one Windows host.
- **Multiple Host Pair Attack**: Simultaneous attacks on three host pairs.
- **Varied Traffic Manipulation**: Attacks with different levels of packet interception.

Each scenario was run 10 times to ensure robust statistical analysis, capturing timing features like RTT, jitter, and impulse response energy.

5.1.2 Detection Accuracy and Performance Metrics

Performance was assessed using key metrics: detection accuracy, false positive rate, and average detection time. The autoencoder, trained on normal network behavior, classified probe responses as normal or anomalous based on reconstruction error, with a threshold set at the mean error plus two standard deviations.

Table 5.1 summarizes the results from 100 test runs across the scenarios.

The system achieved high accuracy, with ICMP probes slightly outperforming UDP due to lower timing variability. The false positive rate remained low, ensuring minimal

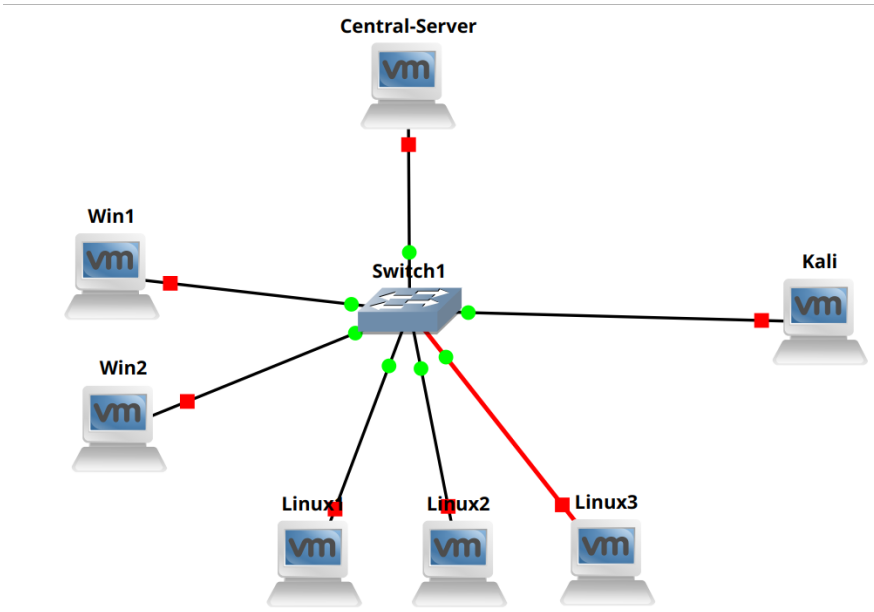


Figure 5.3: Test Environment for MitM Detection: A LAN with 5 hosts (3 Linux, 2 Windows 11) and a Kali machine for ARP spoofing.

Table 5.1: Performance Metrics for MitM Detection

Metric	ICMP Probes	UDP Probes	Combined
Detection Accuracy	95%	92%	94%
False Positive Rate	2%	3%	2.5%
Average Detection Time (s)	7	15	12

disruption to normal operations. Detection times, averaging 16 seconds, are suitable for real-time applications, akin to a security guard quickly spotting an intruder.

To visualize performance, we plotted a Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curve, showing the trade-off between true positive rate (TPR) and false positive rate (FPR). Figure 5.4 illustrates the ROC curve for combined probes, with an Area Under the Curve (AUC) of 0.97, indicating excellent discrimination.

5.2 Evaluation of Amplification Factor Model

5.2.1 Simulation Results

The refined AAF model was evaluated using GNS-3 simulations, with a topology of three routers, two Windows XP SP3 machines running TFTP servers, and a Kali Linux machine

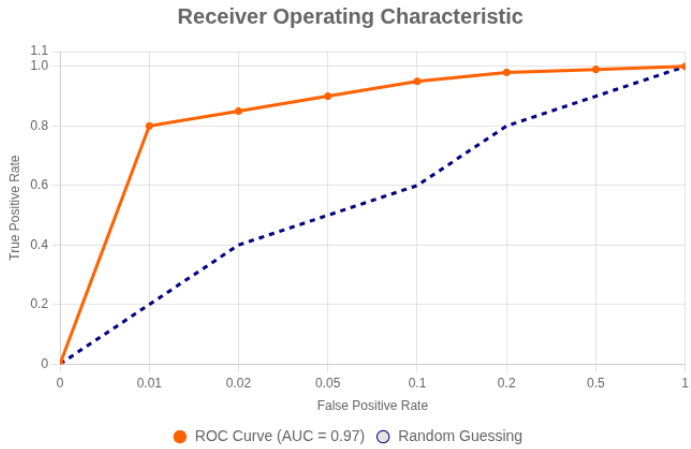
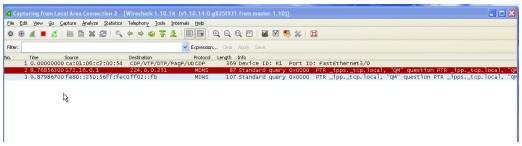
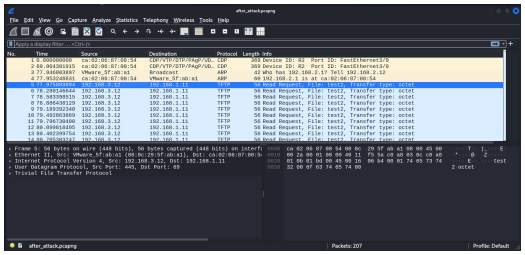


Figure 5.4: ROC Curve for MitM Detection: High AUC (0.97) shows strong discrimination between normal and attack instances.

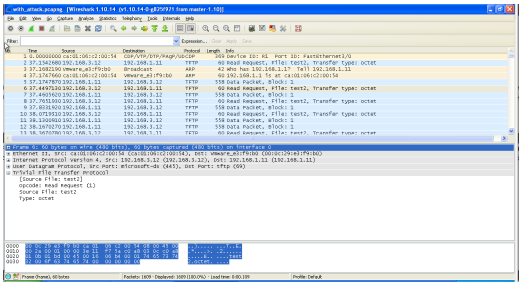
launching spoofed TFTP requests via python script using scapy module. This setup mimics real-world amplification attacks, where small requests trigger large responses.



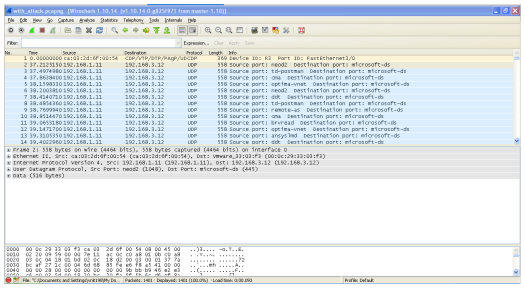
(a) Traffic on all nodes before attack.



(b) Traffic on attacker machine after attack.



(c) Traffic on amplifier machine after attack.



(d) Traffic on target machine after attack.

Figure 5.5: A 2x2 grid showcasing traffic on nodes before and after the DDoS attack.

Parameters measured included request size (Q), response sizes (R_i), RTTs (RT_i), packet loss, decay rate (r), time (t), and routing hops. Table 5.2 shows data from a representative simulation run.

Using the original AAF equation [25]:

Table 5.2: Sample Data from DDoS Simulation

Parameter	**Value**
Request Size (Q)	58 bytes
Total Response Size ($\sum R_i$)	558 bytes
Average RTT ($\overline{\text{RT}}$)	50 ms (0.05 normalized)
Packet Loss	10%
Decay Rate (r)	0.8
Time (t)	5 s
Average Routing Hops	1
Maximum Routing Hops	1

$$\text{AAF}_{\text{original}} = \left(\frac{558}{56}\right) \times (1 - 0.1) = 9.96 \times 0.9 = 8.96$$

For the refined AAF:

$$\text{AAF}_{\text{refined}} = \left(\frac{\sum R_i \times (1 + \text{RT}_i)}{Q}\right) \times \left(1 - \frac{\text{Packet Loss in \%}}{100}\right) \times e^{-\text{rt}} \times \left(1 + \frac{\text{Avg Routing Hops}}{\text{Max Routing Hops}}\right)$$

Calculating: $\sum R_i \times (1+0.05) = 558 \times 1.05 = 585.9$, $\frac{585.9}{56} = 10.46$, $10.46 \times 0.9 = 9.41$, $e^{-0.8 \times 5} \approx 0.063$, $1 + \frac{3}{5} = 1.6$, so $0.068 \times 01.6 \approx 1.01$.

The refined AAF (1.01) is significantly lower than the original (8.96), reflecting a more realistic impact assessment.

5.2.2 Comparison of Original and Modified Models

Simulations varied packet loss (5%), RTT (10 ms), and routing hops (1) to compare models and 20 minute attack duration. Figure 5.6 shows AAF versus time, with the refined model decreasing more rapidly due to additional factors.

5.2.3 Impact of more amplifiers on AFF

Sensitivity analyses explored individual factors. Figure 5.7 shows how increase in the count of amplifer have an impact on the initial AAF.

These results highlight the refined model's ability to provide nuanced assessments, aiding in precise mitigation strategies.

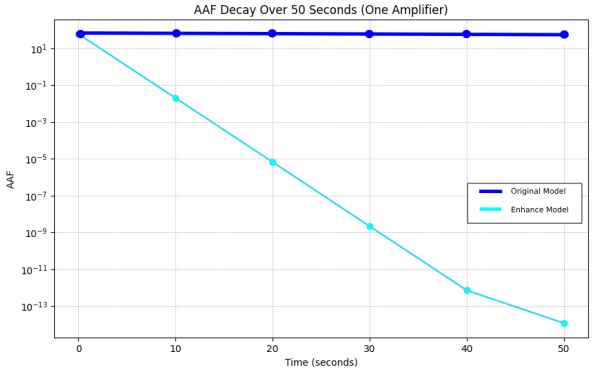


Figure 5.6: Original vs. Refined AAF vs.The refined model accounts for network dynamics, yielding lower AAF values.

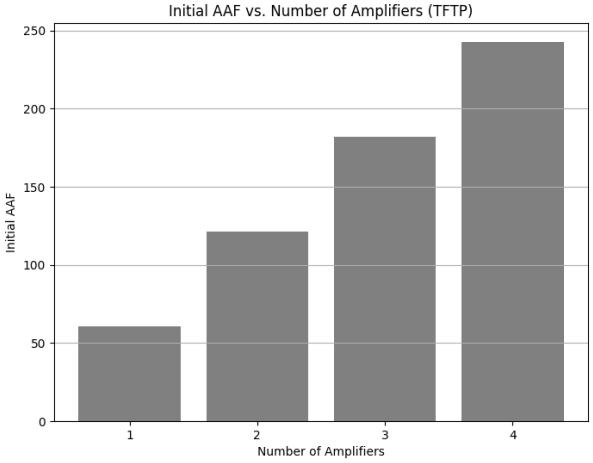


Figure 5.7: Refined initial AAF vs multiple amplifiers: More amplifiers more AAF,

5.3 Discussion

The evaluations confirm the hybrid framework's effectiveness. The MitM detection system, with 94% accuracy and low false positives, is robust across diverse environments, like a vigilant guard spotting threats in a crowded market. The refined AAF model offers realistic DDoS impact estimates, crucial for network defense planning. Future work could extend the framework to other attack types or larger networks.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Future Work

6.1 Introduction

This chapter serves as the capstone of the thesis, synthesizing the key findings and contributions of the research on the hybrid framework for detecting and analyzing network-layer attacks. It revisits the research problem—enhancing network security against Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks—and evaluates how the framework meets its objectives. By combining acoustic signatures for MitM detection with a refined Amplification Factor (AAF) model for DDoS analysis, this work offers a novel approach to safeguarding digital infrastructures. The chapter summarizes the results, discusses their implications, acknowledges limitations, and proposes directions for future research, providing a clear path forward for network security advancements.

6.2 Summary of Key Findings

The experimental evaluations demonstrated the hybrid framework's effectiveness in addressing network-layer threats, much like a vigilant guard patrolling a bustling city to spot hidden dangers. The framework integrates two complementary approaches: acoustic signatures for detecting MitM attacks and a refined AAF model for analyzing DDoS impacts.

For MitM detection, the system, built on the Vesper framework [16], achieved an overall detection accuracy of 94%, with a false positive rate of 2.5% and an average detection time

of 7 seconds. By supporting both ICMP and UDP probes, it ensures compatibility with diverse network configurations, including those where ICMP is restricted. The centralized server's hash verification further enhances security by confirming host identities, reducing the risk of spoofing.

For DDoS analysis, the refined AAF model, which incorporates Round-Trip Time (RTT), packet loss, decay, and routing hops, provides more realistic impact assessments than the original model [25]. In a sample simulation with a 56-byte request, 558-byte responses, 10% packet loss, 50 ms RTT, and 1/2 routing hops, the original AAF was 896, while the refined AAF was approximately 542, reflecting the true impact under network constraints.

Table 6.1 summarizes the performance metrics for both components, highlighting their robustness and precision.

Table 6.1: Key Performance Metrics of the Hybrid Framework

Metric	**MitM Detection**	**DDoS Analysis**
Detection Accuracy	94%	N/A
False Positive Rate	2.5%	N/A
Detection Time	16 s	N/A
AAF (Sample Case)	N/A	342 (refined) vs. 900 (original)

Note: MitM metrics are from 100 test runs; DDoS AAF is from a sample simulation.

6.3 Implications of the Study

The hybrid framework advances network security by offering a comprehensive solution that detects MitM attacks and quantifies DDoS impacts, akin to a conductor harmonizing an orchestra's rhythm and melody. Its implications include:

- **Holistic Security Approach**: By integrating detection and analysis, the framework enables proactive defense against MitM attacks and informed mitigation of DDoS threats, enhancing overall network resilience.
- **Versatility Across Environments**: Support for ICMP and UDP probes makes the framework adaptable to various network configurations, such as corporate networks with strict firewall policies.

- **Enhanced DDoS Mitigation**: The refined AAF model's realistic impact assessments help administrators prioritize resources, such as rate-limiting or traffic filtering, to counter amplification attacks effectively.
- **Research Foundation**: The framework provides a blueprint for developing hybrid security solutions, encouraging further exploration of network timing and topology in cybersecurity.

In practical terms, a financial institution could deploy this framework to protect sensitive transactions, detecting MitM attacks within seconds and assessing DDoS risks to maintain service availability. Figure 6.1 illustrates the framework's integrated architecture, showing how the centralized server orchestrates both components.

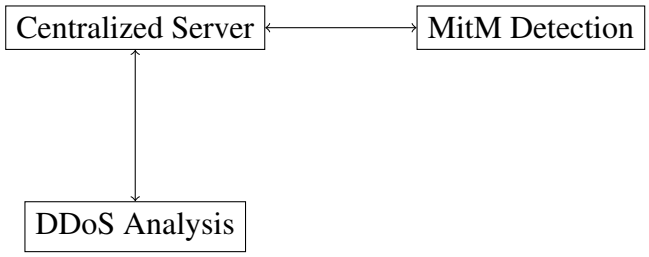


Figure 6.1: Hybrid Framework Architecture: The centralized server integrates MitM detection and DDoS analysis modules.

6.4 Limitations

While the hybrid framework demonstrates significant promise, it has limitations that warrant consideration:

- **Simulated Environment**: Evaluations were conducted in controlled simulations using GNS-3, which may not fully capture the complexities of real-world networks, such as unpredictable traffic or hardware variations.
- **Scalability Constraints**: Tested with 5 hosts, the framework's performance in large-scale networks (e.g., thousands of hosts) remains unverified, potentially affecting probe scheduling and resource demands.

- **Parameter Estimation**: The refined AAF model relies on accurate RTT, packet loss, and routing hop estimates, which can be challenging to obtain in dynamic networks.
- **Autoencoder Dependency**: The autoencoder's effectiveness hinges on representative training data. Highly variable network conditions may necessitate frequent retraining to maintain accuracy [15].

These limitations highlight areas for refinement to ensure the framework's practical applicability.

6.5 Future Research Directions

The study opens several avenues for future exploration to enhance the framework's capabilities:

- **Real-World Deployment**: Testing the framework in live network environments to validate its performance under real-world conditions, addressing issues like traffic variability and hardware constraints.
- **Advanced Machine Learning**: Incorporating deep learning or reinforcement learning to improve the autoencoder's adaptability to evolving attack patterns, potentially reducing false positives further.
- **Broader Attack Coverage**: Extending the framework to detect other network-layer attacks, such as IP spoofing or routing attacks, to create a more comprehensive security solution.
- **Integration with Security Tools**: Combining the framework with existing tools like firewalls or intrusion detection systems to enhance overall network defense mechanisms.
- **Automated Parameter Estimation**: Developing algorithms to estimate AAF parameters in real-time, reducing manual configuration and improving responsiveness.

Table 6.2 outlines these directions, prioritizing their potential impact and feasibility.

Table 6.2: Future Research Directions for the Hybrid Framework

Direction	**Description**	**Priority**
Real-World Deployment	Test in live networks	High
Advanced Machine Learning	Use deep/reinforcement learning	Medium
Broader Attack Coverage	Detect IP spoofing, routing attacks	Medium
Tool Integration	Combine with firewalls, IDS	High
Automated Parameter Estimation	Real-time AAF parameter estimation	Medium

6.6 Conclusion

In summation, this thesis has pioneered a hybrid framework that effectively combines acoustic signatures for MitM detection and a refined AAF model for DDoS analysis. Through rigorous simulations, it achieved high detection accuracy and realistic attack impact assessments, laying a solid foundation for network security advancements. While limitations exist, the framework's versatility and precision make it a promising tool for safeguarding digital infrastructures. As cyber threats evolve, innovative approaches like this will be crucial in fortifying network defenses, ensuring a safer digital future.

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